

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 22, 2008**

Members Present: Ennis, Lardizzone, Carroll, Corsa, Endres, Evans, Harden, Lank, Newstadt, Smith, Spitzfaden, Thompson, Timberman and Wasson

Members Excused: Kitson

Staff Present: Davila and Reid

Guests: Kent Johnson (VA Behavior Health Service), Al Carter (SOS), Ed Moczulski (LP Lo-DEL), Ron Sarg (MOAA), Betty Lou Evans and Gary Morris (American Legion)

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nations Flag.

Chairman Ennis opened the meeting by thanking Vice Chairman Lardizzone for conducting the March Commission meeting and asked all the Commissioners to bring concerns, questions and comments to the Commission or Executive Director before sharing it with the general public.

Mr. Johnson provided pamphlets and a briefing concerning the new VA suicide prevention program. He also spoke briefly about upcoming plans for the Wilmington Vet Center.

Mr. Moczulski provided information about a new VA re-entry program for incarcerated veterans to help them get back into society.

Mr. Morris discussed a potential donation he wanted to make to the Veterans Home and other proposed donations people would like to make. He reported on the logistics surrounding DART adding a bus stop for the Delaware Veterans Home on their route. Mr. Carter mentioned in a survey conducted when the home site was being considered, DART indicated that the Home would be eligible for a bus stop. He expressed his displeasure at their now unwillingness to add the Home as a bus stop location. Discussion followed concerning this topic.

Mr. Reid provided a Veterans Home update packet and briefed the Commission on the contents. Discussion followed.

**MOTION BY HARDEN TO ACCEPT MARCH COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES,
SECONDED BY WASSON, MOTION CARRIED.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Commissioner Newstadt reported that the Northern Cemetery had a successful meeting on April 17, 2008, and provided an outline on the issues discussed. He also commented that both Family Advisory Cemetery Committees are comfortable with the new meeting times and frequency of the meetings. Mr. Davila provided an update on the construction occurring at both Cemetery sites.

COMMEMORATIVE AFFAIRS

Chairman Ennis reported that the Colonial PVA will be hosting the Memorial Day Ceremony on Friday, May 30, 2008, at the Delaware Memorial Bridge. The Korean War Veterans Association will host the Veterans Day Service on November 11, 2008, at the Delaware Memorial Bridge.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Chairman Ennis reported that Commissioner Endres submitted a letter of resignation effective May 1, 2008. Commissioner Endres reported that the balance of the Friends of the Delaware Veterans Home fund is \$491,668.59 and the Veterans Home Fund is currently \$95,106.30.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Commissioner Thompson reported that they have not received results from the legislators regarding their definition of “oversight”.

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

Evans (American Legion) – Reported that Post 19 (Laurel) donated funds for the American Legion bronze plaque. They now have three flags at the Northern Cemetery and delivered eight cases of Girl Scout cookies to the Veterans Home that were donated by the Sussex County Girl Scouts. A framed late 1800 American flag with 45 stars was donated to the Veterans Home by District IV (Sussex County). The American Legion Executive Committee approved a \$50 donation to the Women Veterans Symposium.

Corsa (VVA) – On May 3, 2008, VVA, in conjunction with other organizations, will honor the Gold Star Mothers at a Ceremony on the Green at 12:00 noon or 1:00 PM. VVA Chapter 546 (Sussex County) has moved and combined with a VFW Post due to declining membership. He will be attending a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) meeting and will provide a report at the next meeting.

Newstadt (JWV) – Their Executive Committee will meet on May 6, 2008, to map out their final agenda and activities for the upcoming year. They will be having their annual Installation Luncheon on May 25, 2008. The organization has also approved a \$50 donation to the Women Veterans Symposium.

Wasson (DELVETS) – They had a Monte Carlo night and it went very well. They also contributed to the Women Veterans Symposium. Post 1 will conduct a Memorial Day Service on May 24, 2008, 10:00 AM.

Harden (WAVES) – She thanked everyone who has supported the Women Veterans Symposium and provided a brief outline of the planned events. She also reported that WAVES is getting ready to celebrate their 25th Anniversary.

Lardizzone (DAV) – They are sponsoring a day at the “Blue Rocks” game on June 19, 2008, tickets are \$9. They are taking veterans from various nursing homes. The DAV National Commander’s Testimonial will be at the Dulles Hilton on April 26, 2008. The Connecticut DAV Convention will be from May 1-4, 2008.

Ennis (KWVA) – They also donated to the Women Veterans Symposium.

Carroll (MOPH) – Reported that they also donated to the Women Veterans Symposium. The Department Convention to be held on May 24, 2008, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM, was originally planned for the DAFB Museum, has been relocated to the DAV facility in Camden, DE. They plan to hold elections and installation of officers. The Purple Heart stamp has been reissued and will come out on May 12, 2008. He provided a flyer that was presented at the Wilmington VAVS meeting, requesting donations to replace aging bedside TV sets. The New Castle Chapter has contributed for one TV set.

Lank (MOWW) – Region III of the MOWW is having a Conference in Mechanicsburg, PA, on April 27, 2008.

Smith (AMVETS) – Reported that the Department is currently involved in an Americanism Project in schools throughout Delaware. The AMVETS Department Convention will be held on May 17, 2008, at Post 2 in Millsboro, DE.

Spitzfaden (MOAA) – He reported that the check is in the mail for the Women Veterans Symposium. The POC listing in “*The Centurion*” has been broken down by counties. Mr. Sarg reported that issues concerning TRICARE and Medicare were recently addressed on Capital Hill.

Timberman (CPVA) – They still have not received a reply back from National concerning a speaker for the Memorial Day Ceremony.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Commissioner Carroll asked that the service organization’s bronze plaques be installed sooner than later to inspire other organizations to provide one. Mr. Reid asked for a volunteer to help find a suitable location at the Veterans Home.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Ennis reported that the Commission received an invitation from the American Legion Walter Fox Post 2 to participate in their 4th of July Parade. If your organization would like to participate, contact Mr. Davila.

Mr. Morris asked the Commission to consider a donation from him and his wife of military seals to be placed at the Veterans Home.

MOTION BY LARDIZZONE TO ACCEPT THE MILITARY SEALS AS A DONATION FOR THE VETERANS HOME, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT PLACEMENT IS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND ADMINISTRATOR, SECONDED BY CORSA, MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION BY LARDIZZONE TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER KITSON TO ACT AS A LIAISON FOR THE PURPOSE OF UPDATING AND COORDINATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND THE VETERANS HOME, SECONDED BY NEWSTADT, MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Lardizzzone made a motion to waive the 3-year residency eligibility policy until December 2008. Discussion followed. From the discussion it was agreed that Mr. Reid would forward those applications for waivers to the Commission for review.

Commissioner Corsa brought up the policy issue concerning convicted felons not being allowed admittance into the Veterans Home. He referenced the point that the military is currently accepting convicted felons for service. There was discussion about this policy. Commissioner Corsa made a motion to change the policy to allow convicted felons, no second, and the motion was dropped.

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Commissioner Newstadt reported that McGuire AFB would be having a Military Air Show on May 31 and June 1, 2008. The Armed Forces Day Parade in Newark will be held on May 18, 2008 and all Commissioners are invited to attend. The Department of Defense has announced that the full social security number will no longer be placed on ID cards, only the last 4 will be reflected. He also discussed issues related to TRICARE.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: MAY 27, 2008 (10:00 AM)

**LOCATION: Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100
Dover, DE**

ADJOURNED